

Understanding Society User Support - Support #2309

Are samples in indresp datasets nationally representative?

01/03/2026 12:41 AM - Bingqing Guo

Status:	Feedback	Start date:	01/03/2026
Priority:	Normal	% Done:	50%
Assignee:	Understanding Society User Support Team		
Category:	Data documentation		
Description			
Hi Team,			
Thanks for your help in advance! I have two questions about representativeness.			
First, I noticed that indall datasets contains more obs than indresp datasets. I understand the former include all household members of respondents while the latter only include respondents themselves. I am wondering are all household members nationally representative to UK's population or respondents' representative to UK's population?			
There are many variables only available in indresp datasets. In my case, treatment and outcomes, like health, are only available in indresp datasets. I concern that am I still use a representative sample with indresp? If not, what is the approach you suggest to address this limitation?			
Second,			
User's guide says the data is representative to UK's population. Is UK's population here technically mean people who live in UK now (including people who holds non-UK passports but stay in UK for more than like 6 months? So likely also have address here) or UK's permanent residents? Just would like to understand this definition to polish my study design.			
Thank you so much!			
Best, Bing			

History

#1 - 01/09/2026 11:15 AM - Understanding Society User Support Team

- Category set to Data documentation
- Status changed from New to Feedback
- % Done changed from 0 to 50
- Private changed from Yes to No

Hello Bing,

As you correctly mentioned, indall contains information for all individuals in the household, including children and non-respondents, whereas indresp contains data only for responding (those who answered questionnaires) adults (16+), including proxy interviews. Both datasets are representative of the UK population, provided that the appropriate survey weights are used: weights containing "psn" in their name for indall, and those containing "ind" for indresp.

Regarding the representativeness of the study, I recommend reviewing the information available at the following link:
<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/topic-page/survey-methods/representativeness/>

It is also useful to review the weights FAQ working paper (<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/working-papers/2024-01.pdf>), particularly the first three points, which address representativeness issues.

I hope this information is helpful

Best wishes,
Roberto Cavazos
Understanding Society User Support Team